



*Science, Service, Stewardship*

## J26 Mike, Inflatable Killer Whale!

### Take Home Messages:

You can make a difference, Be Whale Wise! View marine life from a distance, give them space. This is a rare opportunity to see them up close.

These animals are long lived, similar to humans. Granny, J2 is believed to be 101 years old!

These animals are family oriented, led by dominant females.

Highly intelligent and communicate with sound.

### Outdoor tips:

- Choose location that minimizes wind impacts
- Stake the whale using string and stakes in kit
- Put rubber bands around brochures so they don't blow away
- Use tape to prevent brochure stands from falling over
- Bring towel to wipe off table, if raining

**Target Audience:** Outreach event, all ages

**Purpose:** Increase awareness of the endangered status of the Southern Resident killer whale population (J, K, and L pods) and highlight how scientists and NOAA managers use the annual census to monitor population trends, demography, and individual life histories. With technologies such as satellite tags, NOAA scientists hope to gain more understanding of where these animals go in the winter. Whereas D tags, we are hoping to track movement within the water column and record received levels of sound. This data will help recovery managers implement the recovery plan and work to protect the habitat of these animals. Ultimately sharing the threats that these animals face and inspiring our patrons to support recovery efforts is the goal. We hope that everyone who participates in this fin matching activity will realize that protecting these whales, really means protecting and restoring their habitat to ensure their survival.

### Supplies Need:

- ☐ Inflatable whale box (with extension cord), space for 25' long
- ☐ Table cloth with NOAA logo runner
- ☐ Display board in black bag, MMPA and Fin Matching hybrid
- ☐ Killer whale poster
- ☐ Plastic stand (gender and ID tips & How long is this orca?)
- ☐ Outreach brochures
- ☐ Laminated ID guides
- ☐ Outreach SWAG (stickers, coloring sheet and/or trading cards)
- ☐ Outreach tub: Duct tape, blue painters tape, rubber bands, weights, string, business cards (stranding network), dry erase/vis-à-vis/regular

### Highlight our partnerships and share ways to learn more:

- NWFSC- overview, tagging work and how that informs management
- SRKW Recovery Actions, how am I helping? Form online
- NOAA K-12 curricula (Killer whale recovery or Springer, A73)
- Be Whale Wise, brochures and website (<http://www.bewhalewise.org/>)
- Killer Whale Tales (presentations and school visits)
- Listen to Whales (<http://listen.orcasound.net/ListenLiveHere.aspx>)
- Promote Land based whale watching via The Whale Trail
- Orca listserv or NWRO website

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### Facts about Mike J26:

Mike is a 21 years old male.

Mike is life size, 21.2 ft. long (Avg. males ~21.3-23.6 ft. and about 22,000 lbs; females 18-21 ft and 16,500 lbs.)



### Facts about Mike's Family:

Mike swims with mom Slick J16, and two sisters Alki J36 and Echo J42.)

Mom was born in 1972, was 19 when she had Mike, was 24 when she had Keet; 27 when she had Alki, and 35 when she had Echo.

J26 was first seen on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1991 by the Center for Whale Research. Named after the "father of killer whale research," Dr. Michael A. Bigg, who passed away in 1991. His saddle patch reminds researchers at the Center for Whale Research of his probable uncle J3 (est.19953-1995). His probable grandmother was J7 (est. 1939-1983). On the same day J27 (Male • Blackberry • Born 1991) was discovered and neither new whale had been seen two weeks before when J-pod had been last encountered, thus making J26 and J27 close in age.

### Activity Ideas:

1. Do you know which whale in the Southern Resident population this is? How do we tell them apart?
  - a. Use field guides to help them use saddle patch markings to ID
  - b. Fin Matching Game with matriline
  - c. Close family groups- highlight family w/photos
2. How long is this whale? In comparison to other whales around the world SRKW are quite small.
  - a. Have them walk the length and estimate? **He is ~ 21.2 feet long (~11 tons in weight)**
  - b. Do they think he is life size? **Yes, adult males range from 21.3-23.6', females 18-21'**
  - c. Use poster to compare to other species. **Transients are how much bigger? Why?**
3. This is your rare opportunity to see them up close and personal, Are you a whale hugger? Share with me three things you do at home to help protect killer whales?
  - a. Should we ever get this close to them? No, help us promote Be Whale Wise! We ask people to stay 200 yards away (two football fields). Promote land based whale watching, visit The Whale Trail.
  - b. Minimize pollution: Green Your Clean! Prevent toxic chemicals from entering our waterways.
  - c. Learn more about killer whales and the work NOAA is doing to protect them.
4. Thank them for stopping by and try to put something in their hands as they walk away, like a brochure or sticker sheet to help remind them who NOAA is and what we are doing to promote killer whale recovery, as well as Science, Service, and Stewardship.